

The University of Chicago

TRADE UNIONISM IN THE CIVIL
SERVICE OF CHICAGO
1895 TO 1930

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

1939

By
JAMES W. ERRANT

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FOREWORD

The following pages constitute the "essential portion" of a thesis which consists of twelve chapters, an appendix, and a select bibliography. Chapter I deals with the development of trade unionism in the civil service and Chapter XII is devoted to a critical analysis of the union movement among the municipal employees of Chicago. Chapters II to XI inclusive contain detailed studies of the purposes and activities of eight typical employees' organizations in Chicago.

The essential portion includes the whole of Chapter I and an abridgment of Chapters II to XI. The author has endeavored to present here a brief but connected picture of the whole work.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM
IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

1. Civil Service Unionism International in Scope.--Unionism in the civil service is an international development. We find it in some degree in all countries where employes of the state are given a permanent status, but it has evolved most extensively in England, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States¹ In all of the nations, except the latter, the right of association is recognized by law, and in the United States it is not denied. France was the first to adopt a statute (1884) which permitted the state employes to organize. The German civil servants were given this privilege in the Constitution of 1919. Associations of government workers in England grew to be so powerful without legal sanction that in 1927 it became necessary for the state to take official cognizance of them and to surround them with limitations. Employes of Italy are a unit of the Fascist state by government decree.

Walter R. Sharp, who completed a study of the French civil service in 1931, estimated that 60 per cent of the civil service employes in that country were affiliated with their respective unions.² The French civil servants are thoroughly organized; consequently, this figure is probably higher than it is in England and Germany. While the Federal employes of the United States have strong unions, nevertheless, their degree of association does not equal that of France. Regardless of the exact extent of unionization in England, France, Germany, and the United States, the groups of employes are sufficiently powerful to protect and promote their interests, and to affect employment policies of state.

The activities of civil service unions wherever found con-

¹Herman Finer, The Theory and Practice of Modern Government (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1932), pp. 1400-1424.

Leonard D. White, Civil Service in the Modern State (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1930).

²Walter R. Sharp, The French Civil Service (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1931), p. 487.

form to well defined patterns. Primarily the groups are concerned with improvement in wages, working conditions, and retirement and disability benefits. They are likewise interested in an impartial and effective administration of the civil service laws. The European organizations give much of their attention to furthering social welfare programs for the members and their families, to providing courses of study for the members in order better to fit them for their positions and to prepare them for advancement, to professionalizing the service, and to promoting higher standards of administrative procedure. These latter activities are not common to public employe groups in the United States.

Negotiation with administrative officers and legislators, supported by propaganda and political pressure, is the usual method of accomplishing objectives. Political pressure has been amplified through affiliation with organized labor in Europe as well as in the United States. In 1920, the French civil servants used the strike as a more powerful weapon to enforce demands. Public employes in a few American cities have also invoked the strike from time to time. But the strike as a means of reaching the objectives of government workers is generally disapproved by public officials and citizens. The feeling was so intense in France that strikes were prohibited and affiliation with organized labor was ordered discontinued to all except industrial workers employed by the state.¹ Even though the English civil service employes did not take part in the general strike of 1926, they were forced by Parliament to sever their connections with the central labor body because of alleged sympathy with the strikers. In Germany affiliation is permitted by law and in the United States by common consent, but in the cases of England, Germany, and the United States there is an understanding that the use of the strike by civil service employes is contrary to public policy. The method of adjusting differences between organized civil servants and officials has reached its highest development in England in the machinery for conciliation and arbitration provided by the Whitley Councils.² This system is not free from defects, but at

¹The order was a reflection of public opinion as it was not enforced.

²Leonard D. White, Whitley Councils in the British Civil Service (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932).

least it points the way to a more enlightened handling of personnel problems by nations employing large bodies of permanent workers.

The postal employees of the United States are the most widely and effectively organized of the Federal personnel. Organization in the postal service dates back to 1890 with the formation of the National Association of Letter Carriers. Since that time associations have come into existence representing every branch of the postal service.¹ Most of the postal groups are affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Other employees of the Federal government have as their spokesman the National Federation of Federal Employees which came into being in 1917. Its membership in 1931 was approximately sixty thousand. The American Federation of Labor sponsored the development of this group and the latter remained affiliated until 1931 when they withdrew from the national labor body. Immediately following this separation, the American Federation of Government Employees was formed under the aegis of the American Federation of Labor.

The state employees of Wisconsin, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Ohio, Colorado, and California have associations which have been operating successfully for many years.² Teachers were the first local government employees in the United States to organize. The history of this movement among the teachers began in the middle of the nineteenth century and it has spread throughout the nation. In many parts of the country local units are linked to form state groups and the two constitute the National Educational Association. The teachers of Chicago, where organized labor is influential, were instrumental in organizing the American Federation of Teachers which is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. This group has several locals in Chicago and a

¹Sterling D. Spero, The Labor Movement in a Government Industry (New York: George H. Doran, 1924).

²Leonard D. White, Trends in Public Administration (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933), chap. XXI.

In 1935 an organization of state employees was formed in Maryland. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, founded in 1936 and affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, has local unions in a number of state services.

The United State, County and Municipal Workers of America organized in 1937 and affiliated with the Committee for Industrial Organization, likewise have a number of local unions in various state services.

few in other centers where labor is a power.

The policemen and firemen are, like the teachers, well organized. Practically every community of any size has its associations covering the uniformed forces, even though the strength of the units may vary widely. The International Fire Fighters' Association of America, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, has a large number of locals throughout the country.

The municipal civil service employees outside of teachers, policemen, and firemen are not generally organized. Wherever there are labor groups representing the various craftsmen employed by municipalities, there is a type of unionization, but in comparatively few instances do we find civil service workers, regardless of occupation, united for a defense of their common civil service status. Such associations do exist in New York City, Buffalo, Baltimore, Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago.¹ The latter is a strong "union town." The employees of this city appreciate the value of organization. It is our purpose to examine the Chicago situation more closely.

2. The Organization Movement Among the Chicago Civil Service Employees.---Previous to 1895 organization of city employees was confined to policemen, firemen, and teachers. These early associations existed for educational, social, and benevolent purposes. The Policemen's Benevolent Association (founded in 1868) and the Firemen's Mutual Aid and Benevolent Association (1877) were brought into existence to provide a substantial competence for the dependents of men who died while in service or who were killed in line of duty. Funds were obtained through assessments levied against the members, benefit performances, and private subscription. A similar group, the Firemen's Mutual Aid Society, was formed in 1897. These organizations are still functioning, but not as vigorously since 1921 when the City Council adopted an ordinance providing a trust fund for the dependents of those killed in line of duty.

The teachers found social and intellectual satisfaction

¹White, Trends in Public Administration, chap. xxi.

Both the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees and the United State, County, and Municipal Workers of America have local unions in numerous cities throughout the nation.

in numerous small groups, the most prominent of which was the Teachers Club founded in 1893. The latter organization was subsequently displaced by a militant union with more far reaching objectives.

The adoption of the civil service law in 1895 and the creation of a retirement system for teachers in the same year, followed in subsequent years by the growth of organized labor and the rapid increase in the cost of living, laid the foundation for the development of trade unionism in the civil service of Chicago.

a. The Effect of the Merit System upon the Growth of Civil Service unionism.--The civil service law was clearly designed to create a permanent body of efficient employes. Provisions were made for appointment and promotion on a basis of merit and removal after trial on specific charges. Other sections of the law gave the civil service commission appointed by the Mayor certain powers to maintain the efficiency of the personnel. For purposes of administration the act was intrusted to politicians whose entire orientation was away from merit and competency. Instead of having their rights under the law protected by their superiors, the employes frequently became the objects of discrimination because of their positive attitude toward the merit system. The merit law went into effect a few months after the inauguration of Mayor George B. Swift, and he demonstrated his appreciation of it by using the interim to remove practically all Democrats and to replace them with Republicans.

Swift was followed by Carter H. Harrison II in 1897, honest and public minded, but a politician of the old school.¹ He realized that political debts had to be paid and patronage was the currency; therefore, he vigorously opposed what he termed the "ridiculous" merit system. During the early years of his incumbency, Harrison attacked several provisions of the merit law, particularly the trial clause, but without success. Later he altered his position to one of neutrality, and when he left office in 1905 the merit system had become well established.

Edward F. Dunne, a left wing Democrat, held office from

¹Joseph Bush Kingsbury, "Municipal Personnel Policy in Chicago, 1895-1915" (Doctoral thesis, University of Chicago, 1923), p. 57.

For a picture of Harrison's background see Claudius Osborne Johnson, "Carter Henry Harrison I" (Doctoral thesis, University of Chicago, 1927).

1905 to 1907. Like Harrison, Dunne was honest and genuinely interested in the public weal, but was so busy during the greater part of his administration with a stirring municipal ownership campaign that he gave little attention to other serious problems. He was favorable to the merit system but he had little knowledge of the use of this instrument to improve municipal government.

Rough, profane Fred A. Busse, ward politician extraordinary and product of the North Side Republican organization, assumed office in 1907. Although lacking ability in many respects, he was keen enough to surround himself with competent advisers, including the leaders of several of the employe groups. Busse devoted his attention to the problems of his office, and despite the fact that corruption and inefficiency were prevalent in certain departments,¹ he brought the administration of the merit law to the highest point of competency in the period under examination. Qualified observers and municipal employes alike were unanimous in this conclusion. Standardization of employment and the introduction of efficiency measures in the management of the personnel received their first impetus under this unlettered Mayor. In completing this program, he frequently called upon business men, civic agencies, and certain employe groups for assistance in working out general plans or details.

Carter Harrison, again Mayor from 1911 to 1915, continued essentially Busse's systematic employment policy.

William Hale Thompson became Mayor in 1915. He was rich, and did not need personally to reap the benefits of holding public office; but he was easy-going and unscrupulous and allowed his friends to take full advantage of their control of the municipal government. The efficient merit structure erected by Busse and perpetuated by Harrison was wrecked, and the dispensing of public offices became common practice. The spoilsmen were in the saddle, and they used every means to advance the interests of their political machine. They were not concerned with the welfare of the employes, but were the first to appreciate fully the value of the organized workers in furthering their political ends.

The Democratic organization, together with reform elements in the city, was responsible for the election of William E. Dever

¹Report of the Chicago Commission on City Expenditures, 1910.

in 1923. Dever, a man of unquestioned integrity and ability, was interested in restoring the government to the standard of 1909 to 1915. He was in sympathy with the personnel and their problems, and on several occasions co-operated with the leaders of the various unions in laying plans for improving the condition of the employees. Experts in the field of personnel administration were called in by the Mayor to study and report on the situation.¹ Other steps were taken which demonstrated that the Mayor was sincere in his purpose. Before he could consummate his most important plans, Dever was embarrassed by some of his own political backers who refused to sanction parts of his program because of the effect on spoils. These men were so thoroughly out of sympathy with Dever by 1927 that many deserted him and supported Thompson for Mayor.² When Thompson returned to office he merely resumed the policies of his former administration.

The policy of the City Council has usually coincided with that of the Mayor. The majority of councilmen have been more interested in the spoils of office and the next election than in the welfare of the personnel.

The school law in effect until 1917 was designed for a city of moderate size. It empowered a board of twenty-one members to manage the educational system, including the appointment, promotion, and dismissal of teachers. Although the school system was a quasi-corporation for taxing purposes the Board members were appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. This introduced a political background which has colored the entire history of the schools during the period under examination. The political standards of the City Hall have been the political standards of the schools. Corruption and incompetency in one has almost invariably meant a like condition in the other. The law was redrafted in 1917 to coincide more nearly with the needs of the present Chicago. A Board of eleven was substituted for the larger one and certain administrative powers were transferred to the superintendent, but the appointment of the Board was still left to the Mayor and the aldermen.

¹See Leonard D. White, Conditions of Municipal Employment in Chicago, A Study in Morale (Chicago: John F. Higgins, 1925), and the studies made by E. O. Griffenhagen and Associates in 1924 and J. L. Jacobs in 1926.

²Charles E. Merriam, Chicago (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 96.

The efforts of the civil service employees to preserve their status under the merit law in the face of political opposition and without consistent citizen support, brought forth many employe organizations. The first of this type was the Star League, formed by a number of policemen who had been removed arbitrarily by Mayor Swift. When these men were reinstated to their positions by Mayor Harrison, the League disbanded. The outstanding organization built around the merit system was the Civil Service League of 1901 to 1920. It not only protected the rights of the members under the law, but took a consistent interest in fostering the law itself. During the Busse and Harrison administrations (1907 to 1915), a state of co-operation existed between the League and the city officials clearly to improve the administration of the merit law. In line with its interest in the merit system, the League took many steps to place the service on a career basis. The League disbanded because of opposition from the Thompson political organization.

The Municipal Employees Society was founded in 1911 to foster the newly established Municipal Employees Pension Fund, and to protect the rights of employes under the pension law. Beginning in 1926 this organization broadened its program of service to its members.

In 1927 approximately fifty carpenters in good standing under the merit law were laid off because they failed to support the Thompson machine in the election. They formed the Chicago Civil Service Protective Association with the object of using the courts to secure reinstatement. Their efforts were successful and the group became permanent.

None of the foregoing associations were affiliated with organized labor.

b. The Influence of Organized Labor upon the Development of Civil Service Unionization.--The persistent but gradual increase in the cost of living beginning about 1900, culminated in the sharp rise from 1915 to 1920. During the latter period municipal salaries did not keep pace with the cost of services and commodities. This condition is strikingly illustrated by the following table:

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN THE COST OF
LIVING IN CHICAGO AND THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN SALARIES
OF TYPICAL EMPLOYEES IN THE LOWER RANKS OF THE MUNICIPAL
SERVICE - 1915 TO 1920

Year	Cost of Living ^a	Patrol- man	Electri- cal Mechanic	Street Laborer	Elemen- tary Teacher	Jr. Clerk	Jr. Engineer
Dec. 1915	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Dec. 1916	116.5				109.6		
Dec. 1917	138.8			106.7			
Dec. 1918	169.2	113.6	116.7	137.8	119.0	108.3	103.4
Dec. 1919	197.6	136.4	133.3	166.7	127.0	127.0	134.5
June 1920	211.6 (Peak)	151.5	166.7	204.4	158.7	141.7	144.8

^aFigures obtained from the Monthly Labor Review, XVII
(August, 1923), 98, and the Finance Committee of the City Council.

Severe hardship resulted from the disparity indicated. This was especially true of low salaried employes and the unorganized classes who could not enforce higher wage standards.

In the early years of the period under examination working conditions were not conducive to high morale. The hours were long and inconveniently arranged. Vacations were uncertain, and in most cases on the time of the employe. Holidays and sick leave on pay were unknown. In 1895 the policemen and firemen had inadequate systems of providing for the superannuated and disabled, or for dependents of those killed in line of duty. Other employes had no protection of this character.

Improvement in the foregoing conditions of city employes was directly related to the growth of organized labor in Chicago. The Chicago Federation of Labor came into existence in 1896 with thirty-four affiliated locals. Two hundred and twenty-three locals were affiliated in 1924 and this central body claimed to represent approximately ninety thousand workers.¹ Another strong organization is the Chicago Building Trades Council, which was formed in 1890 as the central agency of less than thirty thousand tradesmen, and in 1925 represented about sixty-five thousand.²

¹Truman Cicero Bingham, "The Chicago Federation of Labor" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1924), p. 16.

²Royal Ewart Montgomery, "Industrial Relations in the Chicago Building Trades" (Doctor's thesis, University of Chicago, 1925), p. 11.

The Illinois State Federation of Labor and the Metal Trades Council are likewise influential.

From the foregoing it is clear that there has been a strong trend toward unionism in Chicago during the period under consideration. From an humble beginning, labor has gradually extended its power until it has become a recognized factor in the economic and political life of the municipality. During recent years the politicians have been particularly anxious to please the labor constituency. The central labor bodies and local unions do not hesitate to support their favorite political organizations and if their party gains control they share in the spoils of victory. Many union officials hold influential positions in the party organizations such as precinct captain and ward committeeman, and success at the polls is certain to place several of them in the City Council, the Mayor's Cabinet, the Legislature, or on the Board of Education. These men, together with so-called "Labor aldermen, school trustees, legislators, or administrators" (those politically responsible to labor because of the labor vote) are in a position to influence legislation and administer city affairs to the advantage of the labor class. Under this arrangement union workers secure a large percentage of the jobs in the city service and, because their group is in control, receive particularly favorable salaries and working conditions.¹

Chicago labor does not differentiate between private and public employment. It is interested in unionizing the municipal service and placing the city government upon an equality with private enterprise, even subject to collective bargaining and the strike, if necessary.

The fixed character of municipal income made it impossible to increase salaries beyond a certain point without altering the tax rate. Available funds were soon dissipated in granting higher wages to the organized groups. The latter were then stimulated through promises of higher wages to lobby in the legislature for increased tax rates. Salary advances were subsequently awarded consistent with the political strength of the employees' organizations. Unorganized employees received nothing or little; those or-

¹A study made by Leonard D. White, The Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), demonstrates that jobs in the municipal service are very desirable to labor. See chap. vi.

ganized but not affiliated with labor secured more; while strong groups affiliated with labor commanded the most consideration from the City Council, Board of Education, and administrative officers. Likewise, organizations affiliated with labor were more successful in securing better working conditions and adequate annuities and benefits for members and their dependents.

Because of labor's interest in organizing the city service and because of appreciation on the part of practically all municipal employes of the value of labor connections, the civil service of Chicago has become, during the period under consideration, almost completely unionized and with the exception of the police groups and organizations formed primarily to uphold the rights of the employes under the merit system, affiliated with the central labor bodies has been the rule.

Early in the period, nearly all skilled and unskilled workers were brought under the jurisdiction of unions covering their respective crafts. The membership of these organizations is largely outside the city service. Later, several unions came into existence in various branches of the service whose membership is mainly confined to municipal employes. Among these are the Office Employees' Association (organized in 1917), the Technical Engineers', Architects', and Draftsmen's Union (organized in 1918), and the Street Laborers' Union (organized in 1917). Typical trade union tactics, including the strike, are employed by these groups in reaching their objectives.

Trade union organization in the Police Department began with the Policemen's Protective Association (organized in 1903). This was followed by the United Police (organized in 1907). Both groups were disbanded by Mayor Harrison because of pernicious interference with official prerogatives. The Patrolmen's Social, Athletic, and Efficiency Club was founded in 1916. The outstanding union in the Fire Department is the Firemen's Association (organized in 1902) which affiliated with labor two years later.

Employe organizations with a professional outlook have not met with success. The technical engineers established the Engineering Employees' Association in 1912 to improve the economic position of the engineers and to professionalize the engineering branch of the service. They were fairly successful in the latter endeavor, but not in the former, because of their lack of affiliation with labor. The organization was finally displaced by a union with labor connections and employing trade union tactics.

The Chicago Teachers' Federation is the only group in the municipal service which has taken a well-rounded interest in the welfare of the members. It was founded in 1897 principally to foster the teachers' pension fund, and within a few years developed an interest in salaries, working conditions, tenure of office, protection of members from official discrimination, and the professional advancement of the teacher. The latter interest became less pronounced as the career of the group progressed. Outside of the skilled and unskilled workers, the federation was the first of the municipal groups to appreciate the value of affiliation with labor in gaining concessions from the city officials. From 1902 to 1917, the teachers took advantage of this association. In the latter year a rule of the Board of Education forced them to withdraw from their labor connections; however, they still co-operate very closely with the labor body. In tactics and policy the federation conforms very nearly to the typical trade union. Other teacher unions in the school system are the Elementary Teachers' Union (organized in 1927), the Chicago Federation of Women High School Teachers (organized in 1916), and the Chicago Federation of Men Teachers (organized in 1912). These groups are affiliated with labor.¹

This brief survey of the development of unionism in the civil service of Chicago demonstrates clearly that groups established for the purpose of professionalizing the service and promoting the merit system are not popular, but those organized along trade union lines and adopting either wholly or partially the policies and tactics of regular labor unions are flourishing.

No Chicago Mayor, with the possible exception of Mayors Busse and Dever, and no political party have shown an appreciation of an intelligent employment policy. They have been chiefly concerned with patronage and the success of party organization. In this atmosphere the city employes have found organization to be imperative in order to protect and promote their interests. Groups built around the merit system and the concept of a career in the municipal service have been curtailed in their activity or have disappeared. Organizations like the Municipal Employes Society operate successfully as long as they do not interfere with

¹For a complete list of unions active in the City of Chicago and Board of Education see Appendix A of the complete dissertation on file in the University of Chicago Libraries.

the politicians. The public service trade union has come to the fore as the most effective instrument to cope with the political and economic situation. Labor connections, either actual or sympathetic, political influence, and union tactics best prepare this type of organization to secure recognition for the rights, privileges, and immunities of the municipal employee.

In 1929 approximately 80 per cent¹ of Chicago's twenty-five thousand employees and 67 per cent² of the fifteen thousand persons employed by the Board of Education were organized.³ Of the aggregate of forty thousand workers, about seventeen thousand were affiliated with labor, and fully twelve thousand more were in sympathy with the labor movement in Chicago. This situation had developed since 1895. In that year small groups in the ranks of the police, firemen, and teachers were fostering pension systems. Thirty-four years later, 122 organizations were vigorously engaged in promoting and protecting all interests of the municipal workers, particularly in relation to salaries, working conditions, pensions, and rights of the employees under the merit law.

The program of these powerful groups has a far reaching influence upon the general welfare of the employees. It has a definite effect upon the character of city administration. It is of particular interest to the citizens of Chicago.

3. The Purpose and Scope of This Study. Professor Leonard D. White discovered in 1925 the low condition of morale in the municipal service.⁴ This study was followed by his experiment of 1929 which demonstrated that the majority of citizens, particularly the most able, have no interest in the service as a place of employment and little respect for those who are employed by the city.⁵ This public attitude is, no doubt, depressive of morale.

The object of this study is to discover the purposes and methods of trade unions in the Chicago civil service, to analyze

¹Figures obtained from the Chicago City Council Finance Committee.

²Figures approximated after gathering statistics from various union leaders on the extent of organization.

³See Appendix B for a detailed estimate of the extent of organization in the Chicago civil service in 1919 and 1929.

⁴White, Conditions of Municipal Employment in Chicago.

⁵White, Prestige Value of Public Employment in Chicago.

these in terms of their effect on sound administration, and to suggest a means whereby these unions can play a more serviceable role in the function of the administrative machine. An exhaustive inquiry is to be made of the (1) Chicago Teachers' Federation, (2) Civil Service League, (3) Municipal Employees Society, (4) Organizations in the Police Department, (5) Unionism in the Fire Department, (6) Technical Engineers', Architects', and Draftsmen's Union, Local 14, (7) Office Employees' Association, (8) The Electrical Workers' Union, Local 134, as a typical skilled trade union, and (9) Street Laborers' Union, Local 361, as a typical unskilled trade union. In the final chapter the facts derived from this inquiry together with those from external sources will be marshalled to throw light on the following questions:

1. What are the advantages of the unions from the standpoint of the employees?

2. What are the advantages or otherwise from the standpoint of the administration and citizen?

3. What part do the unions play in the politico-economic organization of the city, if any?

4. In what manner can the unions become more serviceable to the efficient operation of the administrative machine in light of the trends in their social environment from 1895 to 1930?

THE CHICAGO TEACHERS' FEDERATION

The Chicago Teachers' Federation came into existence during a particularly dark period in Chicago's political history. Politicians were in control of the schools and most of them were more concerned with the gains to be derived from holding office than with intelligent management of the school system including the teaching personnel. Despite the many deficiencies in the handling of the teaching personnel, the organizers of the federation were not disposed to go further than to protect the pension system and to professionalize the teaching service. This policy continued from the founding of the federation in 1897 until Miss Margaret Haley and Miss Catherine Goggin with their trade union inclinations became the recognized leaders of the federation in 1899. Immediately the organization assumed new responsibilities, and it was not long before it was actively engaged wherever the welfare of the elementary teachers was involved.

Federation leadership has been continuous over a period

of thirty years. It has been independent, sincere, and vigorous, but lacking in the balance which is essential to consummate leadership. Miss Haley in particular has been intolerant of all opinions which she believed were opposed to the best interests of her group. The character of federation leadership has played a prominent part in dictating the methods used by the organization to further its program. Co-operation with labor (affiliation from 1902-1917), political activity, and well timed propaganda have been depended upon principally. Co-operation with other public employes' organizations and civic agencies has been ignored in most instances.

The federation has been influential in establishing a maximum salary of \$2,500 for elementary teachers, an increase of 212.5 per cent over 1897. Pension facilities have been protected and fostered until a teacher sixty-five years of age with thirty-five years of service enjoys a total annuity, as a result of the Miller law and the regular pension law, of \$2,000 a year. Tenure of office has been assured largely through the activities of the federation. The organization has consistently supported a system which would give the teachers a voice in school affairs. In addition, the federation has maintained a lively interest in equitable taxation, conservation of school lands, and adequate school building facilities.

On the other hand, the federation has initiated salary schedules which were of particular advantage to the elementary teachers. Attempts to recognize training and special ability have been frustrated by the federation. Efforts to modernize the administrative branch of the schools were opposed by the federation until 1917. The introduction of the dual vocational education system has been contested bitterly. School councils have been used as instruments of the federation, instead of means of co-operation between teachers and officials. In the early days of its existence the federation supported a pension arrangement which was unfair to the men, because of the inequality of benefits for men and women. At present the organization insists on the preservation of a pension system which has been condemned by experts as unsound financially, and unfair to future annuitants and the public.

Through its entire experience, the federation has persistently interposed, either directly or indirectly, in the gen-

eral administration of the schools.

THE CIVIL SERVICE LEAGUE

The Civil Service League was founded in 1901 by a group of young men who had no connection with Chicago's governmental life except that gained through entering the service of the city on a purely merit basis. Philip Steele, an operating engineer, and James M. Grimm and Bernard McMahon, clerks, were leaders of this movement. Previous to 1895, the spoils system of recruitment had been in vogue, and even six years after the inauguration of the merit system the majority of the employees and officials were still influenced by the heritage of former years. The league members believed that the solution of the problem lay in protection for themselves and education for the others. Both of these aims could be accomplished through enforcing and improving the law and in time the victims of the old spoils system would see the advantages of the merit system. Thus, the purpose of the league was set forth as "the enforcement and promotion of the Chicago Civil Service Law."

Their mentor was an attorney of independent means, Mr. Western Starr. With this personality behind it the organization moved toward the realization of its aims. Violations of the law were noted, and reported to the Civil Service Commission. If necessary cases were taken to the courts. In time the group co-operated with the commission. In addition, the league was constantly on the alert to block amendments which might have ruined the effectiveness of the law. For promotional and educational purposes, it co-operated with local and national agencies interested in the advancement of civil service, and published a monthly paper known as the Gazette. At all times league affairs were conducted in accordance with high standards.

But it was a slow uphill fight, with the league growing in strength with the more favorable attitude of the city administrators toward the merit system. This strength was not measured by the number of employees in the group, for in reality there were less in 1911 than in 1906, but by the esteem in which a few of the leaders were held by those in authority. Little headway was made in developing an appreciation of the merit system in the minds of the rank and file. The Gazette failed, membership drives failed. Most of the members joined for the moment to gain needed protec-

tion, and then ceased to pay dues.

In 1915, the foundation of the league rested on the good graces of the city administration. This became doubly apparent when Mayor Thompson took office. A few men like Steele and Grimm found themselves standing alone. Since they had spent the best years of their lives fighting for an ideal, and it had failed to materialize, they abandoned the league. In 1920 the organization ceased to function.

THE MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES SOCIETY

In 1910 the fate of the Civil Service League was foreseen by the farsighted leaders of the organization. They looked about for a common ground upon which to draw the employees together. In light of the needs of the time, a pension fund offered the best opportunity. City employees other than policemen, firemen, and teachers did not enjoy an annuity system in 1910. A temporary group secured the passage of the pension law in 1911, and then the Municipal Employees Society (M.E.S.) was formed to preserve and improve it and to serve the contributors to it. It was the hope of those who founded the organization that this co-operation on a common basis would develop a sense of group interest in the employees, which in time could be used for enforcement of the civil service law, the latter step being necessary as a means of protecting rights held under the pension law. The scheme was laid on the theory that a man's economic interest is his primary interest.

The society went about its task quietly but earnestly. Like the Civil Service League it did not attempt to be spectacular. In dealing with the city officials and State Legislature it always relied on courtesy and sound argument. It improved and protected the pension law, promoted social enterprises, and rendered other services to the employees and the city administrators. It has co-operated with several civic agencies in order to identify itself with the element which favors more efficient municipal administration.

The society has fulfilled part of its obligation to the employees by giving them pension, insurance, credit union privileges, and other minor services, but after all their jobs furnish the economic foundation for all of these enterprises. If they lose their jobs they lose all, if they lose promotion they lose much; therefore, the society established headquarters outside the

City Hall in 1927, and increased its economic power through higher dues and a membership campaign with a view to fighting for the civil service rights of the pension contributors. This program has shown constant progress.

ORGANIZATION IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Before the civil service law went into effect in 1895, Mayor Swift removed a large number of policemen who he believed had opposed him in the election. The men were given no hearing. Each was sent a slip of paper informing him that he was no longer connected with the department. The Mayor's action brought forth the Star League which pledged itself to secure the reinstatement of those summarily removed. Upon accomplishing its purpose, the league ceased to function.

From 1903 to 1913, the police department was plagued successively by three different groups: The Policemen's Protective Association; a secret body called the "Rubber Plant"; and finally the United Police. Leadership of these organizations was exploitive. Activities were mainly selfish and malicious. The "inside ring" of the police department controlled these groups even though patrolmen held the official positions. They were wholly reactionary organizations, existing for the purpose of maintaining a system detrimental to the public interest, but substantially profitable to the members of the "ring" and the politicians. At the same time the majority of the men in the groups were honest, law abiding policemen anxious to do their duty, but prevented from doing so through coercion and enforced silence. Unhappy was the policeman who "squealed"; well rewarded was he who said nothing and served well.

The Patrolmen's Social, Athletic, and Efficiency Club, founded in 1916, was refreshing in contrast to these early attempts. It threw off the yoke of the "inside ring," and under the guidance of sincere leadership has sought the advice and co-operation of those working for a more efficient police department. It has seldom proved reactionary. On the contrary, it has made some distinct contributions by working for more equitable salaries and better working conditions for the patrolmen. Under the guidance of the club, the salary of a patrolman was increased from \$1,320 annually in 1917 to \$2,500 in 1927. Likewise the club has been responsible for the one day rest in seven and for more adequate

vacation and sick leave privileges.

UNIONISM IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Firemen's Association, established in 1901 and affiliated with labor in 1904, has been the dominant organization in the fire department. A formidable rival, the Helmet Club, appeared in 1905. The club was opposed to the connection with organized labor. After a bitter struggle over the double platoon system in which the association was triumphant, the Helmet Club disbanded.

The Firemen's Association has been mainly concerned with compensation and working conditions. From 1918 to 1927 maximum salaries were increased from \$1,371 to \$2,500. Previous to 1918 working conditions formed the center of interest. A system which required a fireman to remain approximately eleven out of twelve days on duty was altered by the double platoon system. From a day of uncertain furlough, the men now enjoy twenty days each year. The association is not wholly content, however, with the present situation. It desires higher pay, purchase of uniforms by the department, the eight hour day, and a modification of the drill school methods.

Secondary interests of the union include the pension fund, sick benefits, and trust funds for widows and orphans. The association has not attempted complete domination of the retirement system, as in the case of the Teachers' Federation; nevertheless, it has been influential in pension affairs. It is significant that all of the unsound pension legislation has been endorsed by the association.

Association interest does not extend to co-operation with civic agencies, the press, or other employees' groups. They feel competent to satisfy their own needs solely with the assistance of organized labor. This attitude of self-sufficiency has become so intense that the association believes it deserves full credit for improvements in efficiency and management of personnel in the department.

THE TECHNICAL ENGINEERS', ARCHITECTS' AND DRAFTSMEN'S UNION

The salary question has dominated the entire history of collective action among the engineers. Incidental to it has been the struggle of political appointees to hold their jobs, and a

contest between two rival groups for the headship of the engineering bureau.

A difference of opinion concerning the method of gaining the main objective separated the engineers into two groups. One, consisting principally of men imbued with the spirit of the merit system, believed in trying to influence the city officials through a straightforward presentation of facts. These men formed the Engineering Employees Association in 1912. After a series of disheartening experiences, the association finally resorted to a protest day off, actually a veiled strike, and took part in a political campaign for the sitting aldermen to gain their favor. All of their tactics failed and they abandoned the group in 1926.

The other group, made up of both civil service employees and political appointees, revived in 1926 Local 14 of the Technical Engineers', Architects', and Draftsmen's Union. Local 14 had been dormant since 1921 after having been founded in 1918. The supporters of Local 14 were convinced that facts and figures did not appeal to the psychology of the Chicago aldermen, who better understood the language of votes. The only way to secure voting power was through affiliation with labor. The judgment of this group prevailed and the engineers, with the exception of a few former members of the E.E.A., joined the union.

In this particular case voting power alone did not force the councilmen to provide a salary increase for the engineers. The strike was used at the crucial point in 1926 to decide the issue. Certain elements of the public condemned the engineers for employing such a method. The press was particularly bitter in its denunciation, holding that when a person accepts city employment he renounces the privilege to strike. The engineers did not attempt to answer the contention of the press, but did say that salaries were low and the method employed appeared to be the only alternative. They were sorely in need of economic adjustment, and in order to obtain it, followed the procedure which experience proved would bring the desired result.

THE OFFICE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

The Office Employees' Association, affiliated with labor, was established in 1907. Until 1917 it was a small organization composed of clerks employed in the various union offices in Chicago. In the latter year, the clerks in the city service

joined in such large numbers that they gained control.

Under the leadership of a skillful politician and labor union advocate, the Office Employees' Association has markedly improved the economic condition of the clerk. From 1918 to 1926 the salary of junior clerk was increased from \$1,320 to \$2,060, and the other grades substantially, but not proportionately as great. In 1929, fifteen assistant chief clerks were placed in the chief clerk's grade and were granted a minimum salary of \$4,500 a year. The union has also adjusted grievances.

On the other hand, in 1926, the association frustrated a reclassification of the clerical service which was designed to provide more equitably for the staff. It has consistently advocated a practice called "regrading" which opens the door to unbusinesslike and unfair methods in the management of the personnel. In an effort to enforce its wage demands in 1919-1920, the organization employed the strike on two occasions. The clerk's union is not deeply concerned with the welfare of the entire civil service personnel or with any movement connected with the larger aspects of municipal life; consequently, it shuns co-operation with other employees' groups and civic agencies. Immediate problems are of major importance to the union. These can best be solved, according to the union leaders, through labor and political associations.

THE ELECTRICAL WORKER'S UNION, LOCAL 134

Local 134 is a typical representative of the thirty-four locals affiliated with the Chicago Building Trades Council.

Under aggressive leadership, the well disciplined local 134 has secured a 127 per cent increase in wages from 1918 to 1930 for its men working for the city on a daily basis; in addition, they profit from retirement privileges and two weeks vacation on pay. Through union influence a steadily increasing number of men are being placed on the annual payroll, and they enjoy, in addition to the benefits granted to per diem employees, steady work, fifteen days sick leave on pay, holidays on pay, and ninety-two dollars more salary per year than that of the per diem men.

Particular emphasis should be laid on the fact that local 134 members employed by the city do not form a separate body. They are just as definitely a part of the union as the men engaged

by a contractor, theater manager, or manufacturer. For this reason they are not especially interested in city affairs or a common movement of city employees. Their attention is focused on the union and its relationship to the entire community. To local 134, the city is one of many employers, and it should be dealt with accordingly. As a matter of fact, the City Hall is political and the union is politically influential; therefore, dealings between the two usually end in victory for the latter.

Local 134 and affiliated unions share no responsibility for the conduct of municipal affairs; nevertheless, the leaders of these organizations hold influential positions in the City Hall. This gives them an opportunity to influence administration from the union point of view.

THE STREET LABORERS' UNION, LOCAL 361

Local 361 was organized in 1917. It has jurisdiction over the street sweepers, garbage handlers, and street repairmen employed by the City of Chicago. Under the leadership of Timothy D. ("Big Tim") Murphy and later Michael ("Mike") Carrozzo, the street laborers of Chicago secured a 149 per cent advance in wages from 1918 to 1928. At times the city was paying from one dollar to one and one-half dollars more per day for common labor than was being paid in private enterprise. These laborers, moreover, have enjoyed an eleven day vacation on pay since 1922. The union has allowed the members a two hundred dollar death benefit and five dollars a week for seven weeks in case of illness.

On the contrary, the leaders have frequently taken advantage of their power in dealing with the members and the municipal government. Strikes have been called, at times, in an effort to enforce unreasonable demands. At least two strikes were ordered merely to satisfy the vanity of the leaders. The union has consistently opposed attempts to modernize street cleaning methods, because of the effect on the number of jobs.

